

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. Call me old fashioned...but I really want Ma Bell back (at least it worked all the time, repairs were free, the rates were cheap and you could understand your bill)...since that is impossible it is time to stop this underhanded practice of ripping us off with charges and fees we can't decipher and when you call to ask about them, their representatives can't explain them. They have you over a barrel, since if you deduct them from your bill, they add late chgs on to it...so you go round and round, until your phone service is cut off. Why we take this? Not only from the phone company, but all utilities? Maybe it is time to start a popular revolt...which I would be glad to do if only I was organized.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.